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Adoption of the report of the Committee on its forty-fourth session

Rapporteur: Mr. Hitoshi **Kozaki** (Japan)

Draft report

Addendum

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2006-2007

Part two: biennial programme plan

(Item 3(b))

Programme 23
Public information

1. At its 18th meeting, on 21 June 2004, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 23, Public information, of the proposed biennial programme plan (A/59/6 (Prog. 23)).

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 23 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. The Committee welcomed the presentation of the programme narrative of programme 23. Appreciation was expressed for the efforts of the Department of Public Information. The Committee recognized the important role played by the United Nations information centres and encouraged the Department to continue their important work to fill the gap in the telecommunication area in their respective regions. Concerns were expressed about the growing use of digital texts as this could render printed texts obsolete. The Committee also encouraged the Department

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to continue the use of its radio broadcasts since that was still the means to reach a great majority of the people, particularly in the developing world.

4. The view was expressed that the expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement should be further enhanced, particularly with reference to the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005. The question was also raised of the equal treatment of the six official languages with a view to achieving multilingualism of the web site and United Nations documents.

5. Clarification was sought on the meaning of the terms "United Library Consortium" and "Major broadcasters". The Committee acknowledged the efforts and progress the Department had made in the field of modern media. However, the Committee expressed its concerns regarding the digital divide between the developed and developing worlds, particularly in Africa and many Latin American countries where the use of the Internet was not as widespread and the need to bridge that gap was of the utmost importance.

6. The following amendments were proposed to programme 23, Public information, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2006-2007:

Overall orientation

Paragraph 23.1

At the end of the first sentence, after the words "the greatest public impact", add the words ", in particular by ensuring the full, equitable treatment of all the official languages of the United Nations in all activities of the Department of Public Information, and that the texts of all new public documents in all six official languages, and information materials of the United Nations, are made available through the United Nations web site daily and are accessible to Member States without delay".

In the second sentence, replace the words "information centres, information components, and regional information centres" with the words "information centres and services".

In the final sentence, replace the words "the Assembly and its subsidiary body" with the words "the Assembly, in particular the legislative mandates included in the present biennial programme plan, as well as those of its subsidiary body".

Paragraph 23.2

In the third sentence, the operative clause should read: "The Department of Public Information works closely with substantive client departments within the Secretariat and with other United Nations system partners, including through the United Nations Communications Group, to deliver effective and targeted information programmes on the aforementioned key areas within a common communications framework".

After the third sentence, add the following new sentence: "It endeavours to match its programmes with the needs of its audiences on the basis of improved feedback and evaluation mechanisms including its annual programme impact review".

At the end of paragraph, add the following new sentence: "The Dag Hammarskjöld Library, in close coordination with other United Nations libraries, including through its leadership of the Steering Committee for the Modernization and Integrated Management of United Nations Libraries and also through its own products and services, facilitates access to United Nations information".

New paragraph 23.3

After the existing paragraph 23.2, add the following paragraph and renumber subsequent paragraphs accordingly:

23.3 As cited in the penultimate operative paragraph of General Assembly resolution 58/101 B, particular attention will be paid to the full and equitable treatment of all the official languages of the United Nations in the activities of the Department of Public Information, ensuring that the texts of all new official documents in all six official languages are made available through the United Nations web site daily and are accessible to Member States without delay. Furthermore, the Department will continue to aim to eliminate the disparity between the use of English and the other five official languages in United Nations information materials.

Subprogramme 1
Strategic communication services

Delete expected accomplishment (c).

Add the following new expected accomplishments:

(c) Successful collaboration with client departments to develop communication strategies on priority issues

(d) A strengthened culture of communication and coordination among United Nations system partners

(e) Increased awareness of key thematic issues among audiences through the implementation of communication strategies on those issues

(f) Continued regionalization of United Nations information centres

Delete indicators of achievement (c) (i) and (ii).

Add the following new indicators of achievement:

(c) An increase in the percentage of client departments that indicate satisfactory collaboration

(d) An increase in the number of joint and/or coordinated activities with United Nations Communications Group member organizations

(e) An increase in the percentage of audiences indicating increased awareness

(f) An increase in the number of regions undergoing the regionalization process

Paragraph 23.6

Replace the words "information centres and services" with the words "information centres, information components and regional information centres and services".

Paragraph 23.7

At the end of the first sentence, add the words "information components, and regional information centres and services".

Paragraph 23.8

In the first sentence, replace the words "in local languages, by United Nations information centres and services", with the words "in local languages, where possible, by United Nations information centres and regional information centres and services".

At the end of the paragraph, add the words "and regional information centres".

Paragraph 23.9

Replace the words "the information component of United Nations peace missions" with the words "the information component of peacekeeping operations and of political and peace missions of the United Nations".

Subprogramme 2
News services

In the objective of the Organization, after the words "media outlets"[2], add the words "the general public".

Add the following new expected accomplishment:

(c) Satisfaction with the availability of timely, accurate, objective and balanced information and/or services to the media, delegations, other audiences and redisseminators

Add the following new indicator of achievement and renumber the existing indicator of achievement (a) (ii) accordingly as (a) (iii):

(a) (ii) An increase in the number of radio programmes disseminated directly to broadcast stations, by language and by region

Add the following new indicator of achievement:

(c) An increase in the percentage of users expressing satisfaction with the availability of timely, accurate, objective and balanced information and/or services

Paragraph 23.10

Replace the words "information centres and information services" with the words "information centres, information components, and regional information centres and information services".

Subprogramme 3
Library services

In the objective of the Organization, after the words "the Secretariat" add the words "the general public".

At the beginning of indicator of achievement (a) (ii), add the words "An increase in".

At the beginning of indicator of achievement (b), add the words "An increase in".

In indicator of achievement (b), replace the words "coordinated projects" with the words "completed coordinated projects".

Paragraph 23.14

At the end of the paragraph, add the words "through its leadership of the Steering Committee for the Modernization and Integrated Management of United Nations Libraries".

Paragraph 23.15

In the first sentence, replace the words "the print collections of United Nations documents" with the words "the need for printed copies of United Nations documents and the".

Paragraph 23.18

In the first sentence, replace the words "engaging in collaborative projects" with the words "coordinating collaborative projects".

Subprogramme 4
Outreach services

At the end of indicator of achievement (b) (iii), add the words "sorted by official languages".

Paragraph 23.21

In the final sentence, replace the words "target audiences" with the words "the general public and redisseminators".

Conclusions and recommendations

7. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly allocate programme 23, Public information, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2006-2007 to the Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization Committee) for its review and action and for subsequent submission to the Fifth Committee for its consideration in the context of the overall strategic framework for the period 2006-2007 under the item entitled "Programme planning".**

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Addendum

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2006-2007

Part two: biennial programme plan

(Item 3(b))

Programme 24
Management and support services

1. At its 9th and 10th meetings, on 15 June 2004, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 24, Management and support services, of the proposed biennial programme plan for the period 2006-2007 (A/59/6 (Prog. 24)).

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 24 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. General support was expressed for the proposed programme. The view was expressed that the proposed programme plan was more strategic and action-oriented and with more concise objectives than the current programme. The client-oriented proactive approach to implementing the Secretary-General's management reform measures used in formulating the programme plan, with emphasis on a continuing dialogue on the management issues and on enforcing responsibility and accountability of programme managers, was noted and supported. At the same time,

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the need for the presentation in the programme of a broad outline of management challenges facing the Organization and a better assessment as to whether the strategic framework sufficiently responded to those challenges was pointed out. Efforts of the Department of Management to further enhance and expand common and joint services between the United Nations and the organizations of the United Nations system were also noted and supported. The view was also expressed that the proposed programme plan for regional headquarters was too generic and not sufficiently reflective of issues specific to those offices.

4. Efforts towards the refinement of results-based budgeting as a management tool, with a more succinct and clearly defined time frame, were welcomed, and it was emphasized that those efforts should be systematically continued. The consistency in the presentation of the logical framework for the entire programme was noted. The view was expressed, however, that some expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement require further refinement and that the absence of base-line and target performance indicators in the programme made it difficult for the Committee to assess relevance of the proposed expected accomplishments. The lack of a clear relationship between some of the proposed expected accomplishments and their corresponding indicators of achievement was pointed out.

5. With regard to subprogramme 1, Management services and administration of justice, while measures taken for further delegation of authority for administrative issues to local programme managers was welcomed, it was pointed out that this process should continue and be further broadened to include peacekeeping operations. It was also pointed out that the objectives of the management services component of this subprogramme should be more specific, focusing on the improvements in business processes and efficiency and productivity, and that the subprogramme strategy should be geared towards analysis of needs of the clients of departments and offices with a view to enhancing services. With regard to the administration of justice component of the subprogramme, the view was expressed that the formulation of the component may require further revision in light of the expected outcome of the review of the progress in implementation of General Assembly resolution 57/307 by the Assembly at its fifty-ninth session.

6. With regard to subprogramme 2, Programme planning, budget and accounts, the view was expressed that the objectives of the subprogramme were not specific enough and that some expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement could be better formulated. It was also pointed out that agreement on or adoption by the General Assembly of the scale of assessments is the responsibility of the Assembly, and that the expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement proposed for component (e) of the subprogramme should be reformulated with emphasis on improved timeliness and quality of documentation as important factors in supporting the decision-making process of Member States on the scale of assessments.

7. With regard to subprogramme 3, Human resources management, the need for further refinement of the expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement in order to better reflect the subprogramme objectives and strategy and to show more clearly a linkage between such accomplishments and indicators was emphasized. The view was expressed that improvement in the functionality of the Performance Appraisal System and Galaxy should be included in the list of expected

accomplishments and indicators of achievement under the subprogramme. The view was also expressed that the managerial measures for staff motivation should be reflected in the programme plan, bearing in mind the fact that the staff is the main asset of the Organization. It was also pointed out that the subprogramme may require further revision to reflect any new mandates that the General Assembly may adopt at its fifty-ninth session upon its consideration of human resources management issues.

8. With regard to subprogramme 4, Support services, support was expressed for the efforts made by the Secretary-General to strengthen the security and safety of the Organization. At the same time, a need for better coordination of those efforts between the United Nations and the organizations of the United Nations system was stressed. The view was expressed that the outcome of the review by the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session of the Secretary-General's proposals in the context of the second phase of strengthening the security and safety of United Nations operations, staff and premises should be incorporated into the programme plan. With regard to information and communications technology, concern was expressed that there was no coordination of such activities between the United Nations and the organizations of the United Nations system programmed into the plan and that the agencies continued to develop similar and overlapping information technology systems. While it was recognized that compliance of all information technology projects with the standards promulgated by the Information and Communication Technology Board of the Secretariat was crucial, it was indicated that the link between expected accomplishment (a) and indicator of achievement (a) was insufficiently clear.

Conclusions and recommendations

10. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixtieth session, and biennially thereafter, on the contribution made by the Department of Management to the improvement of management practices, including measures to increase efficiency and productivity, in the Secretariat.**

11. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to develop a time-bound plan for the reduction of duplication, complexity and bureaucracy in United Nations administrative processes and procedures, including adopting a Secretariat-wide approach to streamline and automate them, and to report to the Assembly at its sixtieth session on the plan and on the progress made in implementing it.**

12. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to develop improved tools for identifying the cost of activities and outputs and to report to the Assembly at its sixtieth session on options for applying cost-accounting techniques drawing on best international practices.**

13. **The Committee recommended that consideration be given to the further review and enhancement of the Performance Appraisal System.**

14. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of programme 24, Management and support services, of the proposed biennial programme plan, subject to the following modifications:**

Overall orientation

Paragraph 24.3

In the first sentence, after the words "reform measures," add the words "including those approved by the General Assembly,".

A. Headquarters

Subprogramme 1
Management services and administration of justice

(a) Management services

Objective of the Organization: after the word "Secretariat", insert the words "as a means of enhancing effectiveness, efficiency and productivity,".

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

Add a new expected accomplishment (c), to read: "(c) Improved methods, tools and techniques to assess efficiency and productivity in key management and service functions"

Indicators of achievement

Add a new indicator of achievement (c), to read: "(c) Number of benchmarks and other improved methods and tools utilized by the Secretariat to assess efficiency and productivity and submission of reports to the General Assembly on them"

(b) Administration of justice

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

Replace the word "consistent" with the words "fair and effective"; and letter the existing entry as (a).

Add a new expected accomplishment (b), to read: "(b) Measures to ensure timely participation of managers in the administration of justice process"

Indicators of achievement

Letter the existing indicator as (a) (i) and add a new indicator of achievement (a) (ii), to read: "(ii) An increased percentage of responses indicating satisfaction with the fairness and effectiveness of the system of internal justice".

Add a new indicator of achievement (b), to read: "(b) Material reduction in delays or extension of cases resulting from the failure of managers to respond".

Subprogramme 2
Programme planning, budget and accounts

(a) Programme planning and budgeting

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

Insert a new expected accomplishment (b), to read: "(b) Assisting Member States in taking fully informed decisions on issues relating to the regular budget"; and re-letter the existing entry (b) as (c).

Indicators of achievement

Add two new indicators of achievement (b) (i) and (b) (ii), to read: "(b) (i) An increase in the number of Member States expressing satisfaction with the quality of budgetary documents", and "(ii) 100 per cent compliance with deadlines for the issuance of reports"; and re-letter the existing entry (b) as (c).

(b) Financial services relating to peacekeeping operations

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

Under expected accomplishment (b), replace the words "Strengthened ability of" with the word "Assisting".

Indicators of achievement

Under indicator of achievement (b) (i), replace the words "percentage of members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the General Assembly" with the words "number of Member States".

(e) Assessment and processing of contributions

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat

Delete expected accomplishment (a) and re-letter the remaining entries as (a) and (b)

Indicators of achievement

Delete indicator of achievement (a) and re-letter the remaining entries as (a) (i) and (ii) and (b).

Subprogramme 3
Human resources management

(b) Organizational development

Indicators of achievement

Delete indicator of achievement (a) (i); and renumber the remaining existing entries as (a) (i) and (a) (ii).

Subprogramme 4
Support services

(b) Information and communication technology services

Strategy

Paragraph 24.21

At the end of the paragraph add the sentence "The possibility of gradually adopting open-standard platforms in place of proprietary software for the information and communication technology services of the Organization will be assessed, with a view to evaluating both the benefits, in terms of improved security and reliability and a reduction in license fees, and costs of such an approach."